



**For Immediate Release  
July 11, 2006**

**DOE Uranium Leasing Program  
Draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment  
Available for Public Review and Comment**

(Grand Junction, CO) — The U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management (DOE-LM) invites interested citizens to review and comment on the draft *Programmatic Environmental Assessment* for the Uranium Leasing Program. The document will be available to the public from July 12, 2006, through August 10, 2006. During this period, DOE will host three public meetings to present information and receive comments regarding the draft *Programmatic Environmental Assessment*.

“The Department is reviewing alternatives for uranium mining lease tracts in the State of Colorado as part of the regulatory process,” said Tracy Plessinger, DOE-LM Program Manager. “We welcome comments on the draft *Programmatic Environmental Assessment* for the Uranium Leasing Program.”

Through the Uranium Leasing program, DOE-LM currently administers 38 lease tracts located in Mesa, Montrose, and San Miguel counties, Colorado. The draft *Programmatic Environmental Assessment*, prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, evaluates three alternatives for the future of the program. In the “Expanded Program” alternative (DOE-LM’s preferred alternative) the Department’s Legacy Management (LM) office would continue leasing the 13 active lease tracts and offer leases on up to 25 inactive lease tracts to the domestic uranium industry. In the “Existing Program” alternative DOE-LM would continue leasing the 13 existing active lease tracts, and the 25 inactive lease tracts would remain inactive. The “No Action” alternative would allow existing leases to expire, reclaim all sites, and return all jurisdiction of the land to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management with its concurrence.

(more)

The Uranium Leasing Program has been a federal government program for more than 60 years. Beginning shortly after World War II, the government was mandated to ensure an adequate reserve of uranium and vanadium ores for the nation's defense program. This was accomplished through various Public Land Order withdrawals. The Uranium Leasing Program was initiated to lease the withdrawn tracts of land to private industry to mine uranium and vanadium ores.

The meetings will provide information about the proposed alternatives and give the public an opportunity to provide comments on the draft *Programmatic Environmental Assessment*. A link to the draft *Programmatic Environmental Assessment* can be found on the DOE-LM website at [http://www.lm.doe.gov/land/sites/uranium\\_leasing/uranium\\_leasing.htm](http://www.lm.doe.gov/land/sites/uranium_leasing/uranium_leasing.htm). Oral and written comments will be accepted at the public meetings or through any of the following mechanisms during the public comment period:

Email comments to [ulcomments@gjo.doe.gov](mailto:ulcomments@gjo.doe.gov)  
Call toll free at 1-800-399-5618  
Fax comments to 970-248-6040

Mail comments to:  
Uranium Leasing PEA Comments  
U.S. Department of Energy  
2597 B¾ Road  
Grand Junction, CO 81503

Meeting dates and locations are as follows:

**July 27, 2006**

7:00 p.m.  
Montrose Pavilion  
1800 Pavilion Drive  
Montrose, Colorado

**July 31, 2006**

7:00 p.m.  
College of Eastern Utah  
Arts and Events Center  
639 West 100 South  
Blanding, Utah

**August 1, 2006**

7:00 p.m.  
Norwood Community Center  
1670 Naturita Street  
Norwood, Colorado

**News Contact:**

Tracy Plessinger      DOE-LM Program Manager

(970) 248-6197

###